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Friday, June 20, 2008

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

(aussi disponible en français)

Social Services and Seniors

SOCIAL SERVICES AND SENIORS MINISTER RECOGNIZES MI'KMAQ FAMILY PRIDE PROGRAM NOW UNDERWAY IN PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

CHARLOTTETOWN, PEI -- In recognition of National Aboriginal Day (June 21), Social Services and Seniors Minister Doug Currie applauds the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI for the development of the Mi'kmaq Family PRIDE (Prevention, Respect, Intervention, Development and Education) Program now underway in Prince Edward Island.

The Mi'kmaq Family PRIDE (Prevention, Respect, Intervention, Development and Education) program has been designed to provide a holistic and culturally sensitive approach to individual, family and community wellness and risk reduction through prevention and support for children and families living on-reserve. The program also provides for liaison services between provincial child protection services and the Lennox Island and Abegweit First Nations and a designated Band representative to represent the Band's interest in child protection matters.

The Child Protection Act was proclaimed in Prince Edward Island in 2003 and specifically recognized the rights of First Nation communities of Prince Edward Island.

"As a result of a shared vision and the Province's ability to redirect some federal child welfare funding to this program, the intent of the child protection legislation is now being realized in a substantial way for First Nation children and families of PEI," said Minister Currie. "We expect that this program will also help to build capacity within the First Nation community in areas such as foster care recruitment and adoptions."

Chief Darlene Bernard of the Lennox Island First Nation said that the program is working well in communities. "The program reinforces the traditional patterns of caring, sharing and cooperation to ensure the well-being of our children and their families."

Funding has been arranged through a tripartite agreement between the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI, the PEI Department of Social Services and Seniors and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada. A three person Family PRIDE team, including a coordinator and two family support workers, operate out of the Mi'kmaq Confederacy of PEI.

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